

Re



frame



The automotive landscape has fundamentally changed.

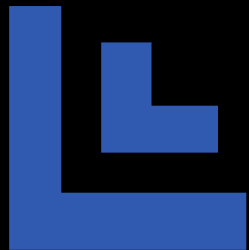
More brands.

More choice.

New needs.


New modes.

New influences.



But.

Mobility is deeply
entrenched in the
Australian psyche.



So where does that leave us?

These impacts are being felt
on both sides of the road.

The explosion of choice,
information and new
experiences lets **brands**
redefine value, compete in
new ways, and blur
traditional boundaries.

This forces **consumers** to
reset their expectations,
preferences, and loyalties
in a marketplace where
brand distinctions are
increasingly fluid.


...as a result, it's all up for grabs.

Navigating these twists and turns.

This Reframe is to help cut through the clutter.

... and with our partners TRA,
we spoke to more than 2000
Australians about the role of
cars in their world, in their
own words.





What did we hear?



The conversation Australians are
having will surprise you.

Firstly...

The basics of what
a car is and does,
makes up only...

half of the
discussion.

We are still talking about the car.

Features remain critical for consideration... but may create, rather than cut through, the clutter.

The list of table stakes are bigger than ever...

- 68% say functional features are important
- More than half say the specs are more important now than before (*regardless of mindset*)
- And 94% are confident in finding the details they need to decide.

The ability to make sense of all the information is crippling consumers...

- 67% engage within the process, believing it's important/hard
- 64% are overwhelmed by the new and many car options*
- 59% feel anxious approaching the buying process.

* +15% from when we asked last year



Why does this matter? Because...

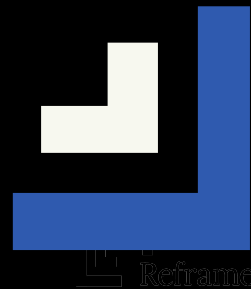
61% are convinced all cars and brands are **the same or similar** these days.



So what does matter more to buyers?

for almost
60%

the conversations now
orbit around how the
car they choose
makes them feel.



Mind the Gap.

Isn't this already
how brands talk?

Yes*

Emotive and visually captivating
marcomms have been capturing buyers
hearts and minds for decades...

*But how do you translate
the '*feel*' from the screen, to
the *real world*?

Where might you start?

Car buyers perennially **anchor** to two
defining mindsets...

Utility & Premium



The default view.

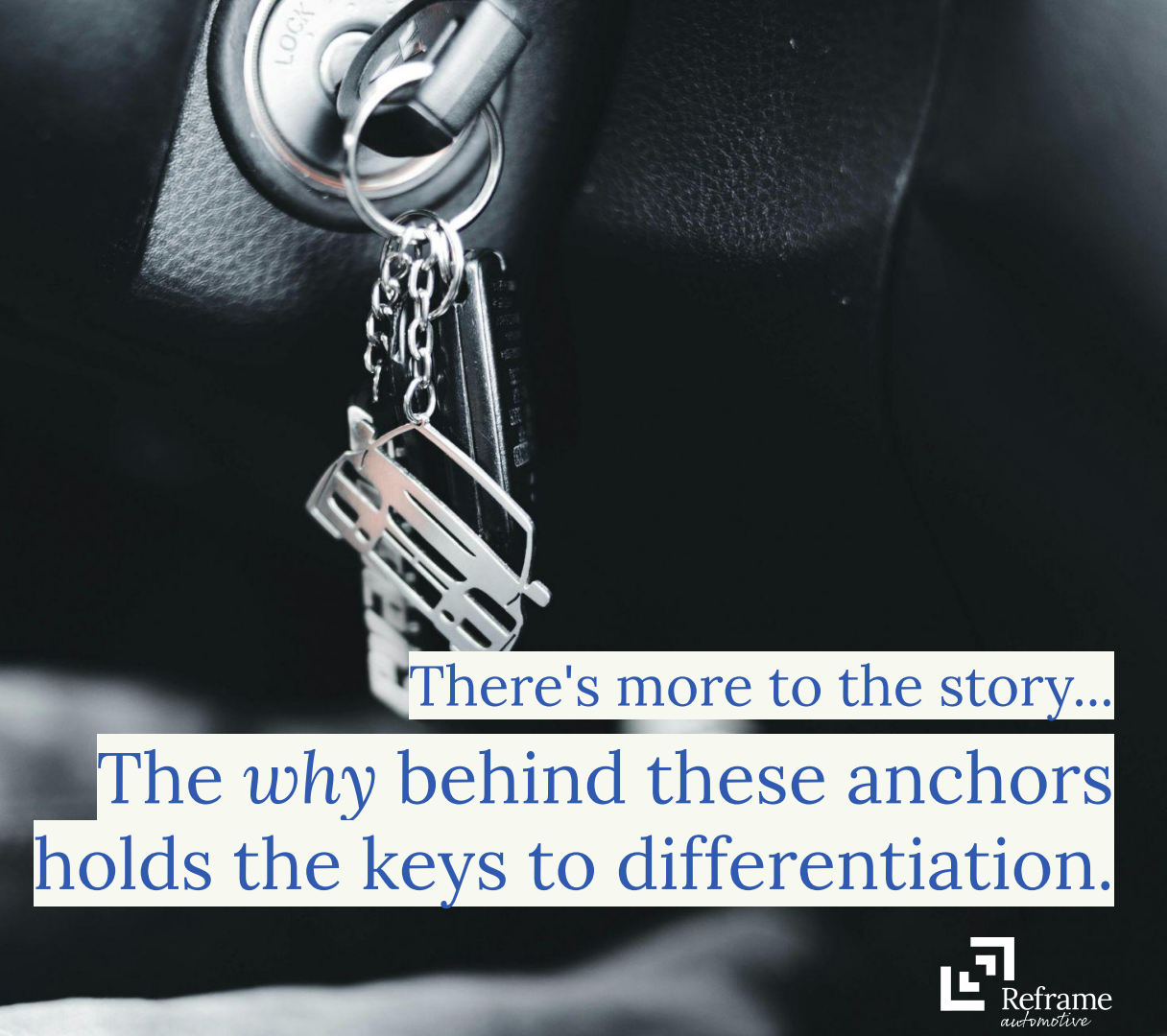
While enduring,
these mindsets have
become conflated...

Utility has become synonymous
with **functionality**

... *no-frills, apathetic, practical.*


Premium has become
associated with **status**

... *pretentious, exclusive, prestige.*



There's more to the story...

The *why* behind these anchors
holds the keys to differentiation.

A dark blue car is shown from the front, with its headlights on, creating a bright glow. The car is centered in the frame. The background is dark, suggesting a night scene. The image is framed by a blue border with white L-shaped corner elements.

Turn on your high beams.

With 92% of buyers excited for something new ...
There is real opportunity to **reframe** the buyer
conversation to focus on the human experiences
beyond the car.

Going *beyond* the utility car means going *beyond the utility car buyer*.

The Utility Buyer

(71% of consumers, 60% of spend)

Function-centric
Mindset



Empowerment-
driven Mindset

THE CAR

Reliable
Efficient
Safe
Convenient

MORE THAN THE CAR

Independence
Progression
Escape
Connection





A new Utility articulation.

Reframing **function** to *empowerment*.

Utility mindset **car buyers** are still looking for core functionality and 'A to B' assurances.

But as **humans**, they are actually highly aspirational. They still seek more from life and are looking to get ahead.

The reframed role of the car is therefore not just about functionality, rather what it enables them to do and achieve.

There are four motivational drivers which underpin the utility values mindset.

Fuelling *empowerment* though...



Be Independent

They want to define and to chart their own course in life.

The car represents the freedom, a tangible and symbolic maker of their independence and motivation to get ahead.



Progress

They have a desire to step up and reach their full potential.

The car is a statement for looking and for feeling successful, in both their work and their life.



Escape

They actively seek respite and relaxation from the daily grind.

The car can be a sanctuary of comfort and disconnection - the journey, and the destination.



Connect

They are family/socially minded, it's about more than just them.

The car is a place to connect with and show support for their loved ones, it can become a new space for togetherness.

Think about how to...

Make upgrades accessible to Utility buyers

The table stakes have changed.

We see Utility-minded buyers increasingly interested in the opinions and intangibles which stand out and signal value *beyond the car itself*.

Think about on-ramps, service and experiences that aren't traditionally on the table for these buyers.



Borrow from typical 'premium' car benefits and find your own spin.

Headlights on Premium.

Going *beyond* the premium car means
going *beyond* the premium car **buyer**.

The Premium Buyer
(29% of consumers, 40% of spend)

Status-centric
Mindset

+

Passion-fuelled-
Mindset

THE CAR

Make/Model
Performance
Styling
Options

MORE THAN THE CAR

Experimentation
Affinity
Exploration
Individuality



A new Premium articulation.

Reframing **status** to *passions*.

Premium minded **car buyers** are still looking for more exclusivity from the car they choose.

But as **humans**, they tend to already be content and confident in themselves. They know who they are, and what they want.

The reframed role of the car goes beyond an
extrinsic badge, to an intrinsic celebration of
who they are and care about.

There are four motivational drivers for the premium minded.

Fuelling *passion* through...



Experimentation

The car is an enabler to see and experience new things.

Tap into their drive for excitement and risk taking, through highlighting innovation and customisation above the norm.



Affinity

The car is a way to signal to and connect to like-minded people.

Foster a sense of belonging to others 'in the know', connecting them to those with the same care and passion.



Exploration

The car becomes a gateway to all of their interests and hobbies.

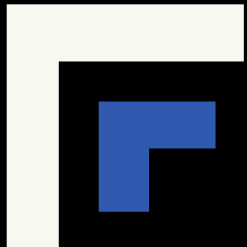
This includes driving and learning the unique capabilities of the car, but also what, where and who it can transport.



Individuality

The car is a statement of their own confident identity.

It's a way to show their interests, hobbies and personality, and so is purposefully curated.



Think about how to...

Provide more uniqueness to Premium buyers

Upgrades are now mainstream.

And with many 'exclusive' gifts and bonuses persistently on offer, these are now the expected amongst premium mindset buyers, quickly becoming the new table stakes.

Think about what more and else you can offer, and also how to deliver them distinctively beyond the car at each moment.



They are looking for something more personal to match their personality.

So what does *extraordinary* look like?

How to stand out in what consumers see as a sea of sameness.

There are **three territories** that will deliver **transcendent value** in customers' minds.



Exceptional on-ramps

Meet them more meaningfully in their world. When they're experiencing life at its richest, seeking empowerment and pursuing their passions.



'Dealer' distinctiveness

Disrupt the dealership experience by bringing their world into yours. Especially where their cognitive load is highest.



Buying a ticket to...

The vehicle is a gateway to lives we seek to live. Ongoing branded experiences are increasingly important to stay in each-others worlds.

Celebrate any extra benefits from the moment you introduce yourself

Utility buyers seek quick cues to establish trust and value.

They are focussed on the details (features, specs, and functionality) - being considered is all about life and lifestyle fit at a minimum.

2x as many lack knowledge about the category (vs premium mindset). Opportunities are lost when they don't know or can't find information.

Talking about any and all value adds early will help them imagine their ambitions brought to life, both through and beyond the car - in whatever motivational context they seek, from Connection to Escape.

Help them be one step ahead, transparency and clarity will empower buyers through the process and cut through confusion, satisfying desires for Independence and Progress.

Ensure your brand is highly visible and easily discoverable.

Get them to bring *their* lifestyle into your sales environment



Utility buyers are 1.5 times more anxious engaging the process vs premium mindset.

They equally value the experiences and service received while car shopping as premium-mindset buyers. However, the 'dealership' experience is often uninspiring and lacklustre.

Attempt to create a more comfortable, personalised and pressure-free engagement that makes them feel important and in control.

Enabling them to explore options with transparent pricing/timeframes taps into their desire for Independence and Progress.

Bring empowerment into the showroom, tapping into areas such as Escape and Connection, specifically demonstrating how they can achieve their goals.

Mindset | Utility – Empowerment.
Territory | Buying a ticket to.

Drive-away benefits and experiences become opportunities

This mindset is just as likely to find value-add benefits as appealing as those with premium mindset.

And even more so with time, as the lines continue to blur and offers like servicing, owners programs and vouchers become less prestige and more accessible.

Think about how you can unlock new opportunities for them, through benefits that signal aspirational lifestyles and achievements.

Facilitating access to networking, experiences and events fulfil their aspirations and ladder to drivers around Progress, Escape, Connection and Independence.

Make sure to offer these benefits in a fun yet practical, clearly useful way that empowers them, but doesn't feel excessive.

What this already looks like for the utility minded...

Who is doing *empowerment* well?



**Hammerbarn
(Bunnings x Bluey)**

Empowering more connection for families.

Rebranded stores and featured merchandise brought the show to life for families and adults, making a trip to the hardware store a true immersive family affair.



**Growing women's football
(Lego x Matildas)**

Breaking stereotypes and empowering young girls.

Inspiring the footballers of tomorrow, and extending beyond custom lego, the partnership includes activations and programs designed to encourage girls to love football.



**Sleeping on Bondi Beach
(IKEA)**

Empowering escape for world sleep day.

Educating people on the importance of sleep, with free bookable events, panels and discussions, and immersive sleep experiences.

Be noticed in of all the right places

This mindset lean into brands which proudly express themselves - because they like to as well.

Premium-minded are 2x more likely than Utility-buyers to value a brand that shows up in/around their spaces.

Enhance where and how you stand out. They value a brand that is a leader and challenges the status quo.

Appeal to their Exploratory and Experimental sides, with new ways to introduce the experience of the brand and vehicle experiences (such as demo-drives, showcases).

Lean into their motivations for both Individuality and Affinity, creating unexpected connections to various parts of their lifestyle they wish to express or elevate.

Surprise them with new and unexpected “showrooms”

They (believe they) are expert buyers and know what to expect

This mindset are comfortable, knowledgeable and assured entering the market and do not believe they will compromise/change - almost 1.5x more self-competent the Utility buyer.

Transform the standard experience, consider ways to bring the dealership into their world and reimagine how and where they test drive, complete ‘paperwork’, pick up their vehicle.

Think differently about bonuses and upgrades, how can you tailor them to deliver value to the Individual.

Explore surprising alternatives, e.g. 3 in 5 find subscription ownership appealing, allowing them to Explore and Experiment through the car(s) they drive.

Constantly raising the bar, and exceeding 'last time' expectations

They are 1.5x more likely to value exclusive offers/gifts gained through purchasing.

'Exclusive' events and access are becoming status quo, but 'exclusivity' is subjective and evolving, they have high expectations on what this could entail in the future.

Celebrate their passion, care and expertise. Consult with them to maintain Affinity, while being an innovator in the offers will talk to their drive for Experimentation.

Lean into Individuality and Exploration, allowing them to experience via and beyond the car, e.g. restaurant tours for foodies, gadgets/mods for techies.

Talk to their Affinity motivation further through member/owner only networking events, advice, deals and merchandising.

What this already looks like for the premium minded...

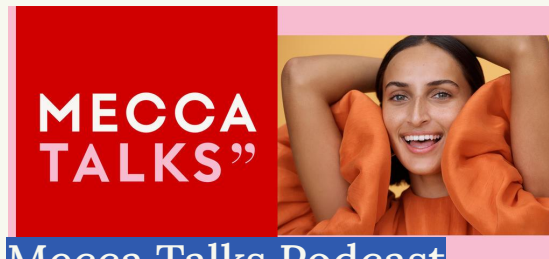
Who is doing *passion* well?



**Icons series
(Airbnb)**

Tapping into a passion for exploration.

Extraordinary (and limited) experiences featuring well-known brands, celebrity hosts, locations in real life and inspired by fiction - such as spending the night in the Ferrari Museum, or Disney's 'Up' House.



**Mecca Talks Podcast
(Mecca)**

Exploration, expression, and experimentation.

Engaging with industry experts trends and brand journeys, this concept leverages the interests of their own customers, enabling them to be on the forefront of the latest in the industry.



**Queer Library
(Aesop x Pride)**

Building affinity within a community.

Turning stores across Australia and New Zealand into a free 'library' of books supporting LGBTIQ+ stories and voices from around the world.

1.

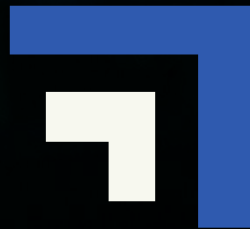
Shift your thinking about the category and what you offer, because how Australians look at cars, and the industry has already fundamentally changed.

2.

Steer beyond the traditional assumptions of Utility & Premium buyer mindsets - focussing on human experiences around what it really means to own a car allows you to connect with greater impact and influence.

3.

Navigate your offer and messages towards the new auto motivations at every touchpoint. Cut through the clutter of vehicle features and specifications, and tap into what resonates and delivers greater value with audiences beyond the car.



Going *beyond* the car also means going *beyond the car buyer*.

The Utility Mindset

CONVERSATION THEMES:

THE CAR

Reliable
Efficient
Safe
Convenient

= *function*

MORE THAN THE CAR

Independence
Progression
Escape
Connection

+ *empowerment*

The Premium Mindset

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THE
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